

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Lee Stepina on 06/28/10.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the claims:

In claim 1, line 12; replace the phrase "process units" with --the plurality of process units--.

In claim 1, line 28; replace the phrase "said process block" with the phrase --each of said plurality of process blocks--

In claim 1, line 31; replace the phrase "coating, developing, and heating the units" with the phrase --the coating, developing, and heating units--.

Cancel claims 29-32.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the obviousness double patenting and art rejection over Takekuma in view of Okubo are withdrawn in view of amendment. Prior art of record does not disclose or suggest a substrate processing apparatus comprising , among others, a carrier block including first and second transfer means, a first delivery stage, a plurality of process blocks each including a plurality of process units, third transfer means transferring the substrate

between the plurality of the process units, a process block control portion controlling the third transfer means and the respective process unit and a controller programmed to determine a process block where there is no substrate or where a final step for the last substrate within the relevant process block will be finished earliest based on the processing information of the substrates from the process block control portions before the substrate is delivered from the first delivery stage to the second transfer means, and for controlling the second transfer means to transfer the substrate on the first delivery stage to the relevant process block.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to YEWEBDAR T. TADESSE whose telephone number is (571)272-1238. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nadine Norton can be reached on (571) 272-1465. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Yewebdar T Tadesse/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1713